

Remarks/Arguments:

This is a reply to the office action of July 2.

The claims have been replaced with a new set (claims 21 - 31) in which claims 23, 25, 26 and 30 are amended old claims 6, 10, 12, and 16 respectively; claim 27 is amended claims 13 and 14; and claims 28 and 29 are derived from old claim 15.

The claims have been amended to more clearly distinguish the current invention from those described in the cited prior art. Reconsideration of the application as amended is requested.

The detachment mechanism described in the current application is relatively simple in operation and assembles the instrument in a reproducible manner where the tension in the strings is the same each time the instrument is assembled. No overstretching of strings occurs as the neck pivots upwards towards the body during disassembly.

The current invention is an improvement over the cited prior art in that with a single lever action the detached guitar neck is locked and clamped to the guitar body. The use of the lever is quicker and has a more positive action than the releasable fasteners of the Stewart invention. The Stewart specification describes a complicated mechanism where a latch holds the neck and body together while two releasable fasteners are used to fix the neck to the body. The different amounts of tightening of the releasable fasteners affects the tension of the strings and hence tuning of the instrument. Consequently, it is very difficult to reproducibly assemble the instrument so that the instrument is tuned the same as it was prior to disassembly. The current invention overcomes this problem by having a single clamping arm that is substantially parallel with the longitudinal axis of the neck and body when in the clamped position.

The invention described in the Myronyk patent is even more complicated having a pivot operated latch and a side spring actuator to affect the position of the latch arm. The problem faced with this mechanism is that it is not possible to see whether the latch is engaged and thus whether the neck and body are properly assembled. With the current invention, the clamping arm visibly engages the retainer member.

Furthermore, the neck joint area of the Myronyk and Stewart foldable guitars is relatively bulky with protruding knobs and latches. These protruding knobs and latches can interfere with a person playing the guitar.

The recited in independent claims 21 and 22, is an improvement over the prior art because it uses a single clamping arm to clamp and lock the neck to the body to produce a rigid, stable, positive - locking assembled instrument. Dependent claims 23 - 30 are deemed allowable as well, for the limitations they inherit from claim 22, in combination with the additional features recited in each claim.

We believe that the claims distinguish the invention from the prior art, and that the application is now in proper form for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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